

Existing Pixel Editing Market

Piskel [Samuel Teare]

Piskel is an online sprite editor that is very simple and easy to use. It has basic pen, eraser, and fill tools. It also allows for vertical mirror drawing. It allows for 90 degree rotation of the image as well as flipping the image. The user is able to clone frames and copy or moving parts of images between frames. Piskel displays a preview of the sprite animation with controllable frame rate. It also allows for export of the frames as a sprite sheets or an animated gif. Features that are missing which a user might desire to use include resizing of a section of the image and free rotation (not just 90 degree angles). The pen tool which has a primary and secondary color option, only allows for primary color usage with a trackpad.

Aseprite [Brayden Wright]

Aseprite is a commercial, open-source sprite editor and animator for Windows, MacOS, and Linux. It supports both sprite layers, setting animation frames on a per-layer basis, and multiple types of ways to view the previous animation frame under a new frame. Users can select from an assortment of preset color palettes or create and save custom palettes. It also supports a tiled mode, taking the created sprite and laying it out in a 9x9 grid allowing the user to see how their sprite looks when tiled. It is possible to display a small preview window of the sprite as a user works on it. Aseprite supports exporting sprite animations as a sequence of PNG images, an animated GIF, or as a PNG spritesheet.

GraphicsGale [Tracy King]

GraphicsGale is a popular sprite editor that recently became available on a free license, but is only available on Windows. The user interface is easy to learn, but compared to others requires more manual mouse clicking. It also lacks certain expected functionality, such as zooming using the mouse wheel. A live preview makes it easy to make quick corrections to flaws in the animation. Users can load previously saved color palettes, it offers alpha blending, graduation and the ability to make quick color corrections. GraphicsGale allows for file loading and conversions and various importing features, such as loading multiple files as one image.

GrafX2 [Dustin Shiozaki]

GrafX2 is a freeware program that was originally available for MS-DOS from 1996-2001. It has since been ported to Windows, Mac, OSX, Android, Linux, and others. It has numerous special effects that are designed to give the user the ability for precision editing of bitmaps. The drawing panel can be split into two panes and one side can be zoomed in or out and edited at any resolution. Any area can be selected and then if the brush tool is clicked the pixels that were selected become a new brush. Some of the effects include blurring, dither, mosaic, rotation, multiple layers, etc. There is another tool that draws several dots on the screen when the button is held down and the cursor is dragged. A spline tool lets the operator draw curves between two points. There is another unique tool that draws many lines from a central point when the cursor is dragged. A gradient tool is included which creates a vector gradient inside the selected area. Several brushes, lines, and other shapes are also present. If the user wants to erase there is no erase tool, but erase can be done by selecting the transparent tool and then selecting a brush. Multiple frame animation is not supported.

Spriter [Will Frank]

Spriter provides a fully fledged sprite animation studio for Windows, Mac, and Ubuntu. Available in both a free and pro version, Spriter has numerous features. Modular animation allows you to build sprites from a set of parts and individually animate each part. Skeletons allow these parts to be mapped to a user defined skeleton for more life-like movement. Spriter supports both layers and multi frame animations. The pro version of Spriter also contains many features useful for implementing sprites directly into a game, such as triggers, project merging between users, collision rectangles, action points, and animations within animations. The base version of Spriter has all the essentials of an animated sprite editor, but to get the more advanced features you have to buy the pro version for \$60.

Pickle [Corin Thummel]

Pickle is a pixel art application for either Mac or Windows. It allows for a free seven day trial before you have to buy the software for \$24.99. Pickle allows the user to make not only sprites for animation but also backgrounds and tilesets for building game worlds. The sprite editor is rather simple. The area for the sprite itself looks standard with the checkered grid for easy placement of pixels. On the left is an area that shows the current frame in variable sizes with an constantly running animation of the frames above. There is a way to select frame rate though but it's done through a rather crude +1/-1 style. The editor has only 5 tools to use: pen, eraser, sample color, fill and select. Each works as expected and with hotkeys it is easy to swap between them quickly. On the right, each frame is arranged in order with drag-and-drop capabilities for easy rearranging. You can export your sprite as either a gif or a png sprite sheet. Overall, in terms of its sprite animation features, Pickle is a rather simple application that feels like a solid example for all the functionality we are looking to create on our program.